United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General meets with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at Headquarters; hails Peace Agreement with Israel as model for settlement of disputes; technical mission to visit PLO officials in Tunis to discuss United Nations assistance in implementing Agreement.

+ UNPROFOR troops prepare to take position between warring Croatian and Serbian forces in Croatia, following agreement in principle on cease-fire; Force Commander calls for maximum restraint by both sides.

+ Libya gives Secretary-General memorandum regarding implementation of Security Council resolutions 731 (1992) and 748 (1992); includes requests for guarantees in event that Lockerbie suspects surrendered voluntarily.

+ Special Representative Jonathan Howe, in New York, attends meetings of donors and Task Force on Somalia; expected to brief Security Council on situation in country tomorrow; UNOSOM II makes steady progress in certifying district councils.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met yesterday evening at Headquarters with Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, and congratulated him on the historic Peace Agreement between the PLO and Israel. The Secretary-General said the Agreement would not only benefit Palestinians and Israelis, but would serve as a model for the international community on the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes.

The Secretary-General said the United Nations was ready to assist in the implementation of the Agreement, and would work with organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the donor community through a Special Coordinator. He noted that the Agreement referred to an international presence, and assured Mr. Arafat that the Organization would be ready to provide electoral assistance if needed. A Task Force on development assistance for Gaza and Jericho had been formed last week in response to a request from the PLO and Israel, and a technical mission would be dispatched to Tunis within the next fews weeks for discussions with PLO officials.

(more)

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United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops today prepared to interpose themselves between warring Croatian and Serbian forces in Croatia after the two sides reached an agreement in principle on a cease-fire, UNPROFOR Force Commander General Jean Cot said. The agreement called for the withdrawal of the Croatian troops from three villages captured on 9 and 10 September, followed by the deployment of UNPROFOR troops in the affected areas.

General Cot told the generals commanding the two sides that he would take the action necessary to fulfil the cease-fire agreement and called on both parties to show maximum restraint until it was implemented.

The Security Council yesterday expressed its concern about the escalation of military hostilities in Croatia. The Council called on the Croatian Government to withdraw its forces to the positions occupied before 9 September, and called on the Serbian forces to halt all provocative military actions.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali yesterday received Ambassador Abdel Kader El-Obeidi, the envoy of the Government of Libya, who delivered a letter from the Libyan Foreign Minister. Attached to the letter was a memorandum regarding implementation of Security Council resolutions 731 (1992) and 748 (1992), which included a set of questions and requests for guarantees in the event that the two suspects in the Lockerbie case surrendered voluntarily.

The Secretary-General is studying the document and will continue his contacts with the parties concerned, as part of his efforts to seek the cooperation of the Libyan Government in implementation of the Council resolutions, according to a United Nations spokesman.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Jonathan Howe, today attended meetings of donors and the Task Force on Somalia at Headquarters, according to a United Nations spokesman. Admiral Howe will attend a meeting of troop-contributing countries tomorrow, and is expected to brief the Security Council on the situation in Somalia.

The spokesman noted that another district council was formed yesterday in Somalia, and two more were expected to be certified on Friday, bringing the total of functioning councils to 30.

Meanwhile, four mortar rounds were fired into the headquarters compound of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) today, the spokesman said. Five soldiers, three international civilian staff and three Somali staff were slightly injured.

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